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THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION
COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS
AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 27 November 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijan Republic regarding the current situation in the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict on the eve of the Summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Lisbon, issued on 27 November 1996 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex urgently circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 10 and 38, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Eldar KOULIEV
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

[Original: Russian]

Statement issued on 27 November 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan

In connection with the forthcoming Summit of member countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to be held in Lisbon on 2 and 3 December 1996, the President of the Azerbaijani Republic, Heydar Aliyev, sent to the heads of State and Government of the OSCE member countries on 6 November 1996 a special statement containing an analysis of the situation with regard to the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict in the period since the Budapest Summit and the necessity of adopting serious decisions at the forthcoming Lisbon Summit.

The President of Azerbaijan noted the importance of incorporating in those decisions the fundamental principles on the basis of which the negotiations on the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict will proceed, namely, respect for the territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic, the granting of broad autonomy to Nagorny Karabakh as a constituent part of the Azerbaijani Republic, and guarantees of security to the entire population of the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.

In their replies, which are still being received, the leaders of the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, Turkey and other States commended the constructive nature of the proposals made by Azerbaijan and expressed support for the idea that the decisions of the Lisbon Summit should give serious impetus to the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

In the course of the contacts which have taken place during this period between the Azerbaijani leadership and representatives of the United States, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Georgia, Ukraine, Kazakstan, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Greece, Norway and other States, questions concerning the preparation of the OSCE Lisbon Summit emerged as the main theme of the meetings.

The draft decisions of the forthcoming Summit were also discussed at the talks held in Helsinki from 18 to 22 November 1996 within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group.

During these talks, pursuing the same line, the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Conference and of the OSCE Minsk Group, in consultation with representatives of the Group's member States, made proposals based on the principles for the settlement of the conflict contained in the document submitted by the current President of the OSCE, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Flavio Cotti, during his visit to the region in February 1996.

The Azerbaijani Republic, considering the proposal of the Co-Chairmen to be a basis for the continuation of work on the formulation of mutually acceptable

principles for the settlement of the conflict, has expressed its readiness to work constructively on that text and its view that the draft must be agreed in order to achieve real results.

However, the Republic of Armenia adopted an extremely negative position with regard to the Co-Chairmen's draft and virtually refused to work on it, thereby demonstrating its overt unwillingness to accept, as a basis for settling the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, the principles put forward by the Co-Chairmen, namely, the territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic, the granting to Nagorny Karabakh of a status that would give it broad autonomy as a constituent part of the Azerbaijani Republic, and guarantees of security to the entire population of Nagorny Karabakh.

At the second stage of the preparatory meeting for the Lisbon Summit, the President of Switzerland, which holds the presidency of the OSCE for 1996, put forward a text identical to the proposal of the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Conference for inclusion in the Summit Declaration. This indicates unequivocally that the international community intends to seek a settlement of the conflict only on the basis of respect for the principle of territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and the possibility of granting autonomy to the Nagorny Karabakh region as an integral part of the Azerbaijani Republic.

The attitude of the Republic of Armenia towards that proposal was stated at the press conference given on 25 November by Mr. Z. Liparidian, chief adviser to the President of the Republic of Armenia, who indicated that the Republic of Armenia intends to exercise its right of veto with regard to the document submitted.

In connection with that statement, the Azerbaijani side considers that the leadership of Armenia must seriously assess the possible consequences of such actions, which would signify that country's virtual opposition to the view of the international community as unambiguously expressed in that document.

The Azerbaijani Republic once again affirms its devotion to the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and expresses confidence that, at the Lisbon Summit of Heads of State and Government of the OSCE, the international community will, on the basis of these fundamental principles, work out a solution that will facilitate the speedy liberation of the occupied territories and the return of the displaced persons to their homes.